

doubted, whether or not it was not my duty to defend my own rights as well as those of the Society I belonged to. I never considered myself as a Spy placed in America to prosecute the views of England upon it. Thus circumstanced therefore, I had only to fix my principles, & doing so to chuse my side. I did so, to the best of my judgment, and have acted accordingly, but with so little bigotry of mind that I do assure you, in the very heat of the war, I held in equal respect, so far as personal character was concerned, Men of principle on both sides, for such there are & will be in every civil war—The very nature of one supposes something difficult in the question. And I cannot but think myself peculiarly unfortunate, that entertaining such sentiments even in regard to Strangers, some of my own nearest Relations should be unwilling to exercise the same candour towards me.

I never meant, in respect to the two Revolutions (as you will find if you will condescend to look at my letters, in case you have preserved them) to compare the personal or political character of the 2 Kings. God knows nothing was further from my heart, and in respect to the American Revolution I look upon it to have been much more brought about by the intemperate violence of the People of England themselves than from any other cause. The Effect however as to us was the same, and it would have been a poor consolation in viewing the miseries of our Country to have said “The People of England are much more to blame for this than the King.”

You will observe, I wave altogether particular Questions of the Controversy, as those perhaps we should never agree in. I contend only, and have a right to contend with warmth against any construction of Immorality in my Conduct, since I was obliged to act according to my own Judgment, and I call God to witness I did so, honestly, sincerely, & voluntarily. If it shall nevertheless in spite of any thing I can say, continue to preserve your /strong/ prejudices against me, though I shall lament this as one of my greatest misfortunes, I shall never repent of obeying the dictates of an honest Mind—

I have troubled you with this long letter, for no other purpose but to clear myself of misrepresentations which I think nothing but the strongest prejudices against me, and the want of a little attention to my letters, has occasioned. Your favours are at your own disposal, and God knows I had never any selfish presumptuous views upon them. But my Character I hold sacred, and as your estimation of it is a matter of great moment I hope you will condescend to consider again whether you are warranted in renouncing me as unworthy of your name & blood, a sentence of too awful a nature to be pronounced by a Man of principle without very good reason.